

Colorado NRCS Leadership Team Teleconference Minutes
July 11, 2006

Attendees:

John Andrews
Ila Binard
Jeff Burwell
Tim Carney
Allan Dix
David Doty

Mike Gillespie
Allen Green
Lynn Hahn
Roy Hall
John Knapp
Jami Shepherd

Janette Terry, CSCB
Petra Walker
Mike Wall
Cathee Wilson

Notetaker: Debbie Kanatzar

Allen G. - Welcome and Budget Planning:

- Introduced Tim Carney as the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs.
- Budget Planning for FY07
 - Anticipate FY 07 to be much tighter
 - We need to begin planning for FY 07 and 08.
 - Awards this year must be submitted to HR by September 30.
 - A bulletin with instructions for awards will be sent out this month.
 - This also includes “keepsake” awards.
 - Equipment meeting was held last week and the approved equipment purchases were determined.
 - A hold was placed on ATVs, IT, and higher level engineering equipment until an evaluation of total needs has been completed.

Lynn H. – Budget: (handout) - Comparison from mid-May was reviewed. Lynn redistributed funds.

- Modifications:
 - \$90,000 for Awards
 - Reduced relocations
 - Increased travel
 - Increased TSP which includes the DOW agreement
 - Non travel expenses increased, e.g. registration
 - Miscellaneous decreased
 - Supplies increased
- Agreements need to be obligated

Lynn H/Ila B. – Vehicles:

- No vehicles are to be purchased
 - Need to reduce our fleet numbers
 - Need to do regular maintenance to keep fleet in good working order.
 - The 2000 models are scheduled to be replaced next – possibly next year.
 - We will donate some vehicles to CSU

Allen G. – Issues of Concern:

- Farm Bill Tech Program:
 - We received \$300,000 matching funds from the State of Colorado.
 - Concerns:
 - We need 25% matching funds at the local level.
 - Visual identification – Farm Bill technicians need to be identified as Conservation District Technicians and not as a NRCS employee.
- Colorado Civil Rights Committee – Chair vacant, ACs and PS were encouraged to submit recommendations for new chair.
- Colorado State Conservation Board Meeting concern of Conservation District overall visibility, especially how the telephone is answered to indicate their presents. ACs will work with DCs to see that offices are assuring that Conservation Districts are recognized in answering phone, signs for offices, etc.

Jeff B. – ECS Update:

- Pasture/hayland training:
 - Was scheduled for August; however, it has been cancelled due to the lack of participants and workload.
- CNMP Training - Scheduled in September
- CRP:
 - Working with FSA on CREP guidelines
 - Re-enrollment is affecting A3 staff workload

Mike W. – Operations:

- PRS:
 - We have begun sending out our weekly report they will go out every Wednesday.
 - We still need to work in the following areas to obtain our goals:
 - Wetlands Created, Restored or Enhanced
 - Reduction in the acreage of Cropland Soils Damaged by Erosion (Ac.)
 - CNMP Applied (No.)
 - CNMP Written (No.)
 - Grazing lands with Conservation Applied to protect the Resource Base (Ac.)
 - Non-Federal Land Management for the protection and enhancement of habitat for species with declining Populations (Ac.)
- Direct Charge:
 - Overall we are looking better we still need to continue to watch:

- 01T –
- 45T Snow
- 8T – WS Operation Work Less
- 67R – CRP Work lots More
- FRPP – Stop Working in this Area
- EGIP – 76T – Work Less
- EQIP – GSWC – 78T – Work lots More

Lynn H. – Comment:

- Leave allocations must be corrected in the Master Record of the employee's timesheet to reflect the program the employee is working on.
- Corrected timesheets will need to be done immediately.

Allen G. - State Scoping Session in Greeley:

- All Principal Staff (no acting's) are required to attend the meeting (a/k/a Leadership Review).
- Purpose:
 - Area and Field issues/concerns for improvement addressed.
 - Team relay to AC (Roy) topics/issues you would like addressed at the meeting.
- Meeting will begin on Tuesday, August 1 at 9:00 a.m. at the Greeley Area office.
- Possible topics of discussion:
 - Resources
 - Office Structure
 - Issues of concern
- The team will meet one-on-one with specific staff at the Greeley Area office in the afternoon.
- Wednesday, August 2, the team will split into two groups to visit Sterling and Brighton Field offices.
 - Sterling:
 - Frank
 - Allen
 - John A.
 - Steve
 - Randy
 - Brighton:
 - Jeff
 - Petra
 - Mike
 - Ila
- Thursday, August 3, the team will reconvene at the Greeley Area office for a wrap-up.

Ila B. – Adm. Update:

- Computer access security clearance:
 - Non-NRCS employees
 - It is a requirement to resign the documents.

- Employee may submit a Claim for reimbursement of expenditures (Form SF-1164) for any cost they may incur, e.g. fingerprints.
- NRCS employees
 - It has been determined that some NRCS employees do not have security clearance and will need to complete the clearance package.
 - Identified employees will be notified.
 - Developing a bulletin for distribution.
- Training:
 - In-state classes
 - Henry Jackson sent an Email regarding State Specific Training Requests for FY-07 in which he received zero response.
 - Areas 2 and 3 requested Management and Supervision for Excellence.
 - Scheduling two more Appropriation Law classes – September and October 2006.

Tim C. – Programs Update:

- CSP:
 - Five watersheds in 2007 were nominated for funding. Anticipate one or two to be selected.
- EQIP:
 - Local workgroup information due to Callie Hendrickson, CACD July 25.
 - 2007 contracts to be done by practice not components using average cost.
- FRPP – six funded
- WRP:
 - \$2 million was allocated for FY06
 - Three projects selected
 - New piloted method for the bidding process of applications – Reverse Auction.

David D. - Area-1 Update:

- 2007 Cost Docket put together for practices

Roy H. – Area-2 Update:

- EWP - Heavy rains have impacted Byers area – flooding.

John K. - Area-3 Update:

- EWP - Heavy rains– flooding.
- Finalizing SWCS meeting.

Cathee W. - Area-4 Update:

- EWP – four fires in the area this season
- WRP pilot

Janette T. – CSCB:

- Direct Assistance Update:
 - The CSCB determined that a more competitive application process would help better illustrate the Districts' resourcefulness by looking at the way they put these funds to work.
 - The board adopted a 3-tier award system based on the number of points each District gained in its Direct Assistance application. The CSCB approved the process and the money allocations for the new 3-tiered distribution system.
 - Tier 1 - qualify for the minimum allocation of \$2,000.
 - Tier 2 - two-thirds of the Districts scored receive at least \$5,300.
 - Tier 3 - Districts earned \$9,000 each.
 - There were nine CDs that scored high enough to be in the third tier.
 - There were 45 DCs that scored in Tier 2.
 - There were 23 Districts scoring in Tier 1.
- Matching Grants Update
 - \$600,000 for District grants in FY07.
 - Half of the \$600,000 is dedicated to providing a 25% State match for the (Farm Bill) Conservation Technician program.
 - Any unspent amount of the \$300,000 will be moved into the Matching Grants fund.
 - CSCB decided to announce the call for proposals for both grants simultaneously. The grant cycle begins during the week of July 17 with proposals coming due on September 18.
 - The Districts will be notified of this opportunity with an email link to the Department of Ag's website.
 - Grant awards will be announced in mid-October of this year.
 - CSCB decided to keep geographic equity in mind when they evaluate projects for funding - but to choose the projects that help are going to make the most progress for delivering "on the ground" conservation.

Adjourn at 11:15a